

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Item Number 509

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HARASSMENT POLICY

Reviewed 4/1/98

It is the policy of the American Library Association to provide its employees with a working environment free from harassment in any form. All supervisory personnel are responsible for assuring such an environment, including the absence of conduct that may be defined as harassment. Because ALA does not tolerate inappropriate and offensive behavior in the workplace, we offer the following definitions, behavioral guidelines, and procedures for handling such a situation.

Harassment encompasses a wide range of behaviors and refers to behavior that is personally offensive. Harassment includes remarks that are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, or interfere with your job performance, as well as intimidation that undermines the integrity of the employer/employee relationship. Harassment lowers morale and reduces employee effectiveness because the staff member is subjected to adverse employment conditions unrelated to job performance.

Definitions

Harassment is defined as behavior or conduct -- including verbal statements, physical expressions, or obscene speech -- directed toward an individual or group of individuals:

- that threatens, either violently or nonviolently, personal or property damage or that incites or is likely to incite lawless action; or,
- that reflects on the employee's appearance, such as racial, ethnic or sexual epithets, slurs or insults directed at an individual or individuals with the intent of doing harm or injury, inciting an immediate breach of the peace, or creating an air of intimidation; or,
- that is potentially libelous and/or slanderous, is of questionable intent and demonstrates insensitivity toward the differences in people, or serves to malign and/or ridicule an employee or group of employees.

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Racial, Ethnic, and National Origin Harassment is defined as harassing behavior that encompasses physical actions or expressions and/or verbally derogatory statements, slurs, or innuendoes directed at an individual's particular racial or ethnic background or national origin and that demonstrates questionable intent or insensitivity and serves to annoy and disturb the recipient.

Sexual Orientation Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual or group of individuals because of their sexual orientation that demonstrates questionable intent or insensitivity and serves to annoy and disturb the recipient.

Sexual Harassment is defined to include verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment, or is used as a basis for employment decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- uninvited or unwanted sexual advances and requests for sexual favors
- non-verbal conduct, such as making suggestive or insulting noises, leering, whistling, or obscene gestures
- unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, such as touching, pinching, coercing sexual intercourse or assault
- overall environment, including the use of vulgar language, the presence of sexually explicit photographs or other materials, and the telling of sexual stories

Religious Harassment is defined as insensitivity and lack of consideration demonstrated in verbal or physical expressions of questionable intent toward an employee's religious beliefs and/or backgrounds.

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Age Harassment is defined as behavior demonstrated in verbal or physical expressions which are offensive, hostile, and of questionable intent to malign an individual or group of individuals because of age or seniority.

The American Library Association will not condone any form of harassment. Any employee who is subjected to or aware of such harassment or intimidation is urged to bring such action promptly to the attention of the Director of Human Resources and/or follow the Harassment Redress Procedure (Policy No. 509.1). ALA will investigate any such complaints promptly and take all appropriate remedial action. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with a full investigation. ALA will not retaliate against any staff member for submitting a complaint in good faith.